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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [UG](#) [CG](#) [SU](#) [CT](#)
SUBJECT: UGANDA/DRC: LRA ABDUCTS 135 IN RETALIATORY RAIDS

REF: KINSHASA 523

Classified By: P/E Chief Kathleen FitzGibbon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Ugandan military and U.N. Mission in Congo (MONUC) officials confirm press reports that the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) may have abducted up to 135 people south of the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) border with Central African Republic (CAR). The attacks occurred on June 2 and 3 in the village of Dakwa, some 125 miles south of the DRC-CAR border. (Note: Reftel reports that up to 200 people may have been abducted. End Note.)

¶2. (S NF) The abductions at Dakwa are the largest undertaken since the LRA massacred 611 Congolese and abducted 165 in Doruma, Duru, and Faradje during in late December, 2008, and early January, 2009. Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) spokesman Felix Kulaiyyge told us that internal LRA communications indicated that the LRA conducted the raids in retaliation for the UPDF's killing of six senior LRA commanders in the past two weeks. The LRA did not say which six commanders had been killed. The Ugandan Government believes that Major General Cesar Acellam and Lt. Col. Okuti were killed near the CAR border. In a separate attack near Dakwa, the UPDF killed several LRA commanders in an area where some senior leaders have been operating. Kulaiyyge also said that the LRA's internal communications revealed that at least 70 LRA fighters had been killed since the beginning of the joint military operations. The UPDF believes the attacks could also be another diversionary move, such as the Christmas massacres, to pull Ugandan military forces away from a group of LRA that may be attempting to move through the tri-border area of CAR into southern Kordufan state in Sudan.

¶3. (S NF) Comment: In the past, the LRA has carried out similar attacks when it is under increased pressure from the UPDF. The UPDF has made significant progress against senior LRA targets over the past month. The abduction could be a indication the LRA groups in the area are becoming more desperate, rather than a sign that they are increasing in strength, which is the common speculation in the press. We are seeking additional independent sources to verify the facts surrounding the abduction and will report septel.
BROWNING